

Volunteer Organization Profile: HELP!Line Center of Sioux Falls, SD

Volunteering in America 2011

Where can I go to renew my driver's license? Are there any non-profits in my area looking for volunteers? Who can I call if I'm feeling lonely? Many people do not know where to find the answers to these questions. A person may need assistance, but he or she does not know where to find it. A person may want to volunteer his or her time to help their communities, but many do not know what opportunities are available.

The HELP!Line Center in Sioux Falls connects people across the Sioux Falls and Black Hill regions with services they need or volunteer opportunities for a chance to give back to their communities. The organization provides service to its callers 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Once volunteers are connected with other nonprofits in the area, they begin their service work. Help!Line also offers their own volunteer opportunities through special programs for youth and other residents.

Joyce Herbst, a HELP!Line Center volunteer, moved to the Sioux Falls area several years ago after the death of her husband and the sale of their business. She deeply missed him and was looking for new purpose in life. Joyce called the Help!Line Center and quickly became involved with the organization's Holiday Clearing House program, a holiday service that matches families who need assistance at the holidays with donors who are willing help. Throughout the years, she continued to volunteer with the organization and is now an indispensable part of the team.

"I hope I make a difference and can have a positive impact on the community," said Herbst. "Volunteering has given me a new purpose in life. It is overwhelming to see the outpouring of giving, whether it's time or resources. You don't know that special feeling volunteering can give until you are able to give of your own time to people who really need it."

Since 1974, the HELP!Line Center has connected individuals in South Dakota with resources and support, ranging from child care assistance to suicide prevention. In addition to providing these services, the center also runs programs to encourage members of the community to get involved and volunteer. The Serve and Learn Student Association (SALSA) connected with 1,500 students last year to encourage volunteerism. The agency also hosts an annual volunteer festival where people can help with "speed service" projects, and a community-wide day of caring.

"Volunteering brings out the best in people and shows me that they really do want to give and to help," said Sara Carothers, volunteer director for the HELP!Line Center. "It is truly heartwarming to hear the stories of volunteers connected through HELP!Line Center and the impact they have on our communities."

More information on the HELP!Line Center can be found at www.helplinecenter.org.

The Corporation for National and Community Service is a federal agency that engages more than five million Americans in service through its Senior Corps, AmeriCorps, and Learn and Serve America programs, and leads President Obama's national call to service initiative, United We Serve. For more information, visit NationalService.gov.